

REMARKS

Reexamination and reconsideration of the claims 29-50 is respectfully requested.

Claims 33, 36, 40, 47, and 50 were objected to for informalities. Claims 33, 36, 40, 47, and 50 were amended to correct any informalities that existed. The amendment of claims 33, 36, 40, 47, and 50 is not an admission that the art of record discloses, teaches, or otherwise suggests the features of the claims; rather, the amendment is merely to correct formalities. Withdrawal of the objection to claims 33, 36, 40, 47, and 50 is respectfully requested.

Claims 29-33, 36-40, 43-47, and 50 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. sec. 102(b) applying U.S. Pat. No. 5,351,327 (the '327 patent). For a patent to be applicable under sec. 102(b), the patent must, *inter alia*, explicitly or inherently disclose each and every feature of the claimed invention.

It is respectfully submitted that the '327 patent does not disclose, teach, or otherwise suggest either explicitly or inherently, each and every feature of independent claims 29, 37, and 44. Instead, the Office Action misinterpreted the '327 patent by suggesting that chamfer 22 is a portion of a front face of ferrule 20. See Fig. 2 of the '327 patent.

Specifically, the Office Action states that the '327 patent discloses a "...ferrule body defining a lengthwise extending bore capable of receiving an end portion of an end portion of an optical fiber and a chamfer (see a figure below), the chamfer being adjacent to the front face. Wherein the front face of the ferrule body including a compound surface having a ground portion (24) and an unground portion (22) [the chamfer 22], the bore opens through a hemispherical ground portion." See p. 2-3 of the Office Action.

Suggesting that the chamfer of the '327 patent is a portion of the front face of ferrule 20 is an incorrect statement and

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contrary to the objective evidence of record. First, the present invention states that "[t]he ferrule can also include a chamfer 24 proximate the front face to facilitate the insertion and alignment of a ferrule within a connector sleeve or the like and to reduce the size of the front face that must be ground and polished." See pp. 7-8, ll. 30-2 of the present application. Simply stated, the chamfer is not a portion of the front face of the ferrule.

Furthermore, the '327 patent similarly states that the chamfer is not a portion of the front face. Specifically, the '327 patent states "...ferrules commonly have a chamfer from the outermost diameter leading to the spherical, angled end face." See the Abstract of the '327 patent. The '327 patent also states that "...ferrules are chamfered in order to minimize the amount of grinding and polishing required to finish the ferrule end, and to facilitate proper alignment of the ferrules within the connector receptacle." See Col. 2, ll. 18-23 of the '327 patent. Thus, the objective evidence of both the '327 patent and present application demonstrate that the chamfer is not a portion of the end face. Instead, the chamfer is a transition portion from the cylindrical ferrule body to the ferrule front face. Thus, the Office Action misinterpreted the disclosure of '327 patent because the chamfer is not a portion of the front face. For at least the reasons stated, the withdrawal of the sec. 102(b) rejection of claims 29-33, 36-40, 43-47, and 50 is warranted and respectfully requested.

As an independent basis, dependent claims 30, 38, and independent claim 44 recite a chamfer being adjacent to the front face, where the front face includes a ground portion and an unground portion. The '327 patent does not explicitly or inherently, disclose, teach, or otherwise suggest each and every feature recited in claims 30, 38, and 44. Additionally, dependent claims 36, 43, and 50 recite a ferrule body including a

chamfer where the unground portion is disposed proximate to the chamfer. Likewise, the '327 patent does not explicitly or inherently disclose, teach, or otherwise suggest each and every feature recited in claims 36, 43, and 50. For at least these reasons, the withdrawal of the sec. 102(b) rejection of claims 30, 36, 38, 43, 44, and 50 is warranted and respectfully requested.

Claims 34-35, 41-42, and 48-49 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. sec. 103(a) applying the '327 patent without a teaching reference. For a single patent to be applicable under sec. 103(a), the combination of teachings must, *inter alia*, expressly or inherently, teach, disclose, or otherwise suggest each and every feature of the claimed invention. Additionally, motivation and suggestion to combine the teachings must be present.


For at least these reasons stated above, a *prima facie* case of obviousness with respect to independent claims 29, 37, and 44 is lacking. Thus, the withdrawal of the sec. 103(a) rejection of dependent claims 34-35, 41-42, and 48-49 is warranted and respectfully requested.

No fees are believed due in connection with this Reply. If any fees are due in connection with this Reply, please charge any fees, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account Number 19-2167.

Allowance of all pending claims is believed to be warranted and is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is welcomed to telephone the undersigned to discuss the merits of this patent application.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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